

REMARKS:

This Amendment is in response to the Office Action dated June 18, 1998 and is submitted in accordance with Rule 116 in an earnest effort to put the application in better condition for allowance. It is believed that Applicant's amendment has not amended the claims in a way that would raise new issues for consideration or that would require further searching of the prior art on the part of the Examiner.

The specification has been amended to correct a typographical error.

Claims 1, 3-8, and 10-18 are pending in the present application. The Examiner rejected claim 15 under 35 U.S.C. §102 as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,706,097 issued to Schelling et al.; rejected claim 18 under 35 U.S.C. §103 as being unpatentable over Schelling et al.; and rejected claims 1, 3-8, and 10-14, 16, and 17 under 35 U.S.C. §103 as being unpatentable over Schelling et al. in view of U.S. Pat. No. 5,742,339 issued to Wakui.

Submitted herewith is a 37 CFR 1.131 Declaration of prior invention to overcome Schelling et al. The Declaration sets forth facts sufficient to show conception of the invention prior to the effective date of Schelling, 9/13/96, coupled with due diligence from prior to the effective date of Schelling to the filing date of the present application (constructive reduction to practice).

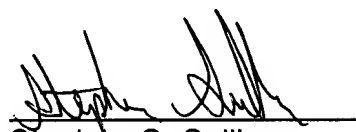
Applicant's arguments from the prior Amendment are hereby incorporated by reference. It is submitted that the secondary reference, Wakui, fails to add to the teaching of the previous references on record, and that the references fail to teach or suggest the claimed features of the present invention.

In view of the foregoing, it is submitted that independent claims 1, 3-8, and 10-18

are allowable over the cited references. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and passage to issue of claims 1, 3-8, and 10-18 as now presented.

Applicants' attorney believes that this Application is in condition for allowance. Should any unresolved issues remain, the Examiner is invited to call Applicants' attorney at the telephone number indicated below.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Stephen G. Sullivan", is written over a horizontal line.

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